AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-18 (canceled).

Claim 19. (currently amended):   An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a first selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing a first image data;

a storage device for storing a plurality of stored images;

a second selector for selecting as a second image data one of said plurality of stored images based on a user input selection;

a ~~circuit~~ device for combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data; and

a third selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

Claim 20. (currently amended):   ~~The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising:~~ An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a first selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing a first image data;

a storage device for storing a plurality of stored images;

a second selector for selecting as a second image data one of said plurality of stored images;

a device for combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

a third selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data; and

a housing;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, and

wherein said plurality of input interfaces, said storage device, said first selector, said second selector, and said third selector are provided within said housing.

Claim 21. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said ~~circuit~~ device for combining combines said first image data and said second image data by merging said first image data with said second image data.

Claim 22. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 21,~~ An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a first selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing a first image data;

a storage device for storing a plurality of stored images;

a second selector for selecting as a second image data one of said plurality of stored images;

a device for combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

a third selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, said device combines said first image data and said second image data by merging said first image data with said second image data, and

wherein said merging is performed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

Claim 23. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 19, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images is a text message.

Claim 24. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 19, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images is a background image.

Claim 25. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 19, wherein at least one of said plurality of input interfaces is coupled to an image capture device.

Claim 26. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device comprise an image scanner.

Claim 27. (currently amended):   The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device comprises a ~~network interface~~ networked device.

Claim 28. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device processes an encoded image data.

Claim 29. (currently amended):   An image handling method, comprising:

first selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

second selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data based on a user input selection;

combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data; and

third selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

Claim 30. (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein said combining merges said first image data with said second image data.

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Claim 31. (currently amended):   ~~The method of claim 30,~~ An image handling method, comprising:

first selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

second selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data;

combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

third selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, said combining merges said first image data with said second image data, and

wherein said merging is performed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

Claim 32. (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images comprises a text message.

Claim 33. (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images comprise a background image.

Claim 34. (currently amended):   ~~The method of claim 29,~~ An image handling method, comprising:

first selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

second selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data;

combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

third selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, and

wherein said acts of first selecting, second selecting, third selecting, and combining are performed in a common housing.

Claim 35. (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein at least one of said input interfaces is coupled to an image capture device.

Claim 36. (previously presented): The method of 35, wherein said image capture device comprise an image scanner.

Claim 37. (previously presented): The method of 36, wherein said image capture device comprise a networked interface.

Claim 38. (previously presented): The method of 37, wherein said image capture device processes encoded image data.

Claim 39. (new):   An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing input image data;

a plurality of stored images;

a selector for selecting one of said stored images based on a user input selection;

a device for combining input image data with selected stored image data to produce combined image data; and

a selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive the combined image data, wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is a printer.

Claim 40. (new) An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing input image data;

a device for inputting user entered text to be combined with said input image data;

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a device for combining input image data with the user entered text to produce combined image data; and

a selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive the combined image data, wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is a printer.

Claim 41. (new):   An image handling method, comprising:

selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive output image data;

selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data based on a user input selection; and

combining said first image data with said second image data to produce the output image data,

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

Claim 42. (new):   An image handling method, comprising:

selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive output image data;

selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving input image data;

inputting user entered text to be combined with said input image data; and

combining said input image data with said user entered text to produce the output image data,

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

Claim 43. (new):   A computer program stored on a computer readable medium, said program when executed by a processor causes said processor to execute an image handling method, said method comprising:

reading first image data received from a selected one of a plurality of input interfaces;

reading second image data received from a selected one of a plurality of stored images, said second image data based on a user input selection;

combining said first image data with said second image data to produce the output image data; and

transmitting the output image to one of a plurality of receiving devices,

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

Claim 44. (new):   A computer program stored on a computer readable medium, said program when executed by a processor causes said processor to execute an image handling method, said method comprising:

reading first image data received from a selected one of a plurality of input interfaces;

reading text data to be combined with said first image data, said text data based on a user input;

combining said first image data with said text data to produce the output image data; and

transmitting the output image to one of a plurality of receiving devices,

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device.

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